

# AMBITIONS OF YOUTH RARELY MARK ONE'S LIFE WORK

Careers Seldom Decided Before Years of Discretion, but Thrills of Being a Professional Man Are Not to Be Compared With Youthful Desire to Lead the Band, Be a Fireman or Engineer, or Even a Conductor—How a Boy's Love for Making Candy Established a Great Business—Several Writers Had Art Aspirations and a Bootblack Would Be an Opera Star

**W**HAT was your youthful ambition? And how nearly did you realize it? These two intensely personal questions interest every one and a little thought into childhood's years shows one how far from the goal he or she is now. Many a good laugh—or perhaps a pang—is stirred by the recollection. To learn just what were the youthful ambitions of persons in varied walks of life, The New York Herald to-day presents the following interesting symposium. Note that in only a single instance of the many cited, has the childhood ambition been realized even in part.

By TORREY FORD.

**I**N his early youth," the biography reads, "he wanted to be the leader of a circus band. He wanted to be out in front of the parade, twirling a silver sceptre, tossing it in the air and catching it behind his back. He had watched other band leaders and knew he could better their performances by at least two twirls to the drum beat.

"It was more than a youthful ambition; it was the motive of his childhood. He practised with his father's golf club, with his mother's cane, with the cook's umbrella. He grew perfect in execution. He gathered boys from the neighborhood and formed them into a band, which he led proudly up and down the streets. He was the prince of his precinct. Little girls bowed down before him and boys trembled at the wave of his sceptre.

"When any one asked him what he was going to be when he grew up, he had no hesitancy in telling that he was going to be a band leader with all the trimmings. Now, as a Justice of the Supreme Court, he often smiles at references to his early ambitions and insists that he missed much in not carrying out his youthful aspirations."

**For Fewer Professional Men Were Early Ambitions Realized**

If careers were decided on before the age of discretion—say, between the ages of six and ten—the nation would have far fewer lawyers, writers, doctors, preachers, bankers and brokers. Instead we would have a race of circus band leaders, cowboys, policemen, street car conductors and candy store keepers.

The thrill of being a mere professional man seems to have almost no appeal to the youth of the country. Manufacturing and engineering are counted as nothing compared to taking people's nickels away from them and pulling the bell rope to start the car. And who wants to be a lawyer when he might direct traffic on the avenue or stand out in front of a theatre calling out the check numbers for the cars to roll into position?

No youngster with any imagination ever planned for himself a career that consisted chiefly of sitting behind a flat top desk and letting the underlings have all the fun of running the typewriters, the adding machines, answering the telephone and seeing who comes in the main door.

If a canvass were taken of New York's ten-year-olds there probably wouldn't be one in the lot who wouldn't prefer being an elevator boy in the Woolworth Building to owning the entire building. And there wouldn't be a girl who wouldn't prefer being in the tingling chorus of the Winter Garden to holding down a full professorship in social ethics in any university you cared to name.

It's a shame in a way that mankind isn't more faithful to the plans of buoyant youth. There might be some upsets, of course. A potential railroad president might be running a locomotive and a corporation lawyer might be sitting behind the big wheel on the rear of a fire truck. But somehow the world would survive and mankind might be getting a lot more fun out of life than actually is the case to-day.

If youthful aspirations were recorded we predict that not more than one out of a thousand would mature into full accomplishment. More than that, if future plans of college students were jotted down on an official chart only rarely would the plans develop exactly according to specifications. Many a man has studied for the law and turned out to be a literary light of no mean glow. On the other hand, more than one man has prepared himself with a literary background, expecting to set the world afire with his productions, and wound up by being a salesman for a ladies' dress house.

**No Caste or Creed Displayed In Selections by Youth**

In the plans of youth there never is much Freudian repression. A youngster selects his career without any regard for caste or creed. Whether it's rolling ash barrels for a living or playing centre field on the New York Giants, he owns up to his preferences unmindful of parental or ancestral traditions. And who knows but what he might make a far better outfielder than he would the professional man planned for him by his sponsors in the world?

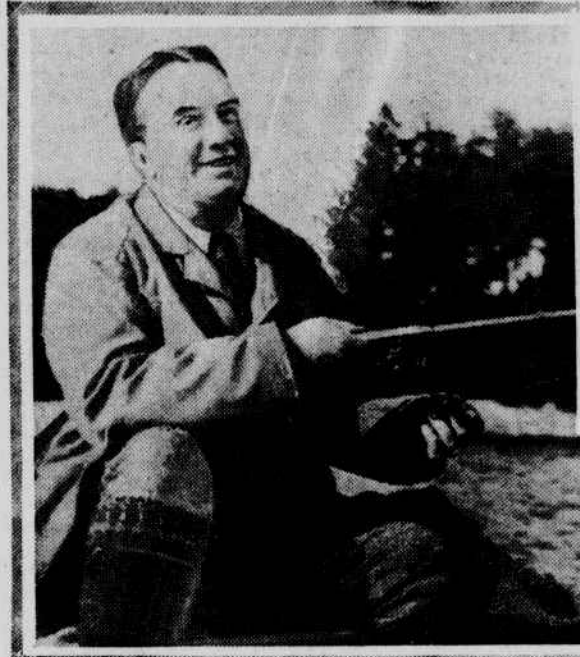
Some youngsters go in for "careers" as various exploits fan their imaginations. One week they plan on being motormen and the next week they are just as serious about fitting themselves to be mounted police. Steadfastness to one profession means nothing to them.

Others have a fixed idea and never swerve from it—that is, not until they reach the age where they realize that practical considerations will pop up to disturb their persistence. And then they give up the original plan only with heavy sighs and quaint misgivings.

Wandering about, talking with any one from a college professor to a bootblack, we found almost no one following up the career he had planned for himself in the carefree days of his marble shooting past. And then just for the sake of proving the rule we came on the case of the late John S. Huyler.

founder of the candy business that bears his name.

When Mr. Huyler was a youngster he spent most of his rainy afternoons cluttering up the kitchen with his pots and pans. He liked candy and he liked to make it. When he grew up he told his incredulous elders he was going to make a fortune out



of candy. They laughed at him, and he nodded his head at a "Just you wait!" angle.

In 1874 young Huyler began the manufacture of candy in his father's bakery in Jane street, New York city. He made a soft molasses chewing candy that candy makers told him was impractical. But John S. Huyler had made too many batches of molasses candy during his youth not to know what he was about. He went right ahead and made it, confident that he was on the road to fame.

To introduce the molasses candy to the public, he sent three or four thousand samples a day through the shopping district, which was then down on Fourteenth street. District after district was covered and the samples were closely followed by the famous Huyler wagon—a wagon with transparent sides on which the lettering could be read night and day. A gong announced its arrival and the candy was sold as fast as it could be passed out to the customers. "Fresh Every Hour" was the slogan of the system.

Mr. Huyler opened his first store in January, 1876, at 869 Broadway. For equipment he had a few tables and a pair of scales. He waited upon the trade himself. One candy maker, assisted by a girl and a boy, constituted the "factory force" in the back room.

It was at this first Huyler store that the first candy maker made a window demonstration of pulling molasses candy. No regular candy maker could be found who would consent to making a spectacle of himself for the sake of the business. Finally a friend of Mr. Huyler volunteered his services and went into the window to pull candy. People flocked from all sides to see the free show. The real success of the Huyler business dates from that time.

John S. Huyler lived to see his business develop far beyond the dreams of his childhood. Probably he became more of a capitalist and less of a candy maker than his original plans called for, but he never once wavered in his main idea—by profession he was a candy maker.

If all men followed their youthful threats, or even their adolescent dreams, as faithfully as Huyler there would be some queer changes in the professional world. For example, three well known writers of to-day began their careers firmly convinced that they were artists.

Booth Tarkington's one ambition was to be a great artist. Joseph C. Lincoln practically considered that he was an artist. When Mr. Lincoln migrated to New York from Cape Cod some twenty-odd years ago he carried under his arm a portfolio of pen and ink sketches and crayon drawings. He "peddled" them about among the magazines and created what he was forced to admit was something less than a stir with the art editors. Just to dress up his drawings and make them look more salable he penned some little jingles to go with them. The idea was that he would sell the picture for so much and throw in the poetry for nothing.

**Found His Jingles the Bait For Selling His Pictures**

It was some time before Mr. Lincoln realized that the jingles were selling the pictures. As a matter of fact, it was his wife who suggested that perhaps the jingles would sell without the pictures and save him a lot of time and bother. Only after a long mental struggle did the artist give up his career and become a writer.

To-day Joseph C. Lincoln is the author of about as many Cape Cod novels as there are years on the calendar of his writing career. He hasn't drawn anything but royalty checks for the last twenty years. And yet there are persons who have seen Mr. Lincoln on the amateur stage who insist that instinctively he is not an artist nor a writer but an actor. However, he waves these protests aside and admits that he is through "picking careers" for himself.

Dean Herbert E. Hawkes of Columbia University claims that he never had any boyhood aspirations or any dreams of world conquest other than to do the thing he was doing as well as he could until some larger

Booth Tarkington's aspiration was to be a great artist, not an author. Joseph C. Lincoln, too, had ambition this way.



Herbert E. Hawkes, dean in Columbia University, confessed that his ambition always was just ahead of him—the day's work. William Faversham wanted most as a boy to be a Scotch soldier in kilts.

to get back to the scholarly work again. For a while I had charge of the undergraduate work in mathematics and put all I had into the job.

"When the war came the dean of the college went to Washington to serve as Assistant Secretary of War and I was made acting dean. I had no ambition to be permanent dean, yet when in 1918 I received the appointment I had been working hard at the job for over a year. I think of myself now as more of a professor of practical ethics than as a college disciplinarian."

**Boss Sits in the Outer Room: Secretary Has the Private Office**

Dean Hawkes probably conducts the only office in New York where the secretary sits in a private room and the boss sits out in the open at the front.

"I find it works better that way," he explained. "I prefer to decide myself who shall be passed on to my secretary and who shall talk with me. It saves lots of time. When the conversation is of a personal nature I take my caller into a private office. Otherwise I sit out in the open and decide very rapidly whether a man needs to talk with me or whether my secretary will answer the purpose."

Dr. Margaret E. Noonan, professor of elementary education in the School of Education of New York University, was another college person who thought she had never had any startling ambitions in her youth. She had just drifted into teaching, she thought, and had not planned on it from her cradle days on up. But, thinking back, she did remember a few weird whims of her girlhood.

The height of her ambition was to wear a red velvet gown when she became a lady of fashion. And then she planned on having seven sons and started a hope chest for them when she was still in the doll age.

"But I didn't let these ambitions regulate my life," said Dr. Noonan. "I have never worn a red velvet dress, and the nearest I have approached to the seven sons is being aunt to a few youngsters."

"I don't remember feeling very strongly about anything when I was a little girl except one time when a man said that I couldn't be a lawyer when I grew up because I was a girl. I got quite excited and said that although I didn't know whether or not I would want to be a lawyer if I did want to be a lawyer I would be one. I would be whatever I wanted to be."

"Probably that is as near as I ever came to registering a youthful ambition," said Dr. Noonan, with a concluding smile that left one with the impression that she has gone ahead rather faithfully with carrying out her ambition.

Our favorite newspaper editor, a mild mannered man of slight build, admits an early ambition of wanting to be six feet three inches tall, weigh 190 pounds and be a prize fighter. He wanted to wear a wrist strap, so he could hit 'em hard and often and never feel the effects.

Our favorite author has an ambition which

Wearing a red velvet gown was the youthful ambition of Dr. Margaret E. Noonan, professor in New York University.



he insists is still uppermost in his mind as a goal of complete accomplishment. With an egg in one hand he wants to take careful aim at an electric fan revolving at a high rate of speed and let it fly. And he wants to be still conscious when the pieces are picked up.

**Wanted a Barrel of Sugar Where He Could Get It**

At the tender age of six our own ambitions took a saccharine turn. When we were grown to full manhood we intended to have a barrel of sugar beside our office desk, which would give us an opportunity to take a lump of sugar at any time during the day when we particularly felt that we needed a lump of sugar. We told parents and friends of the idea, and grew indignant when they appeared to doubt the sincerity of our intention. We even placed bets on the subject, and have been bounded ever since for full payment.

"My earliest recollections are that I wanted to be a soldier," said William Faversham, "but a Scotch soldier, and wear

kilts and march to the skirl of the bagpipes. At a very early age I had an old discarded suit of kilts with a Balmoral hat given to me by some friend or relative (I can't remember which), and my mother had taken me to Aberdeen. I used to hide this suit in what they called the 'drying room,' sneak in there and dress up, cut myself a wooden sword and go out into the woods and have terrible fights and hand-to-hand skirmishes with tall ferns and cedar bushes—anything that my sword could 'lick,' and you should have seen the broken and bleeding army lying on the ground when I got through!

**First Appearance on Stage For Six Years Decided Him**

"But when I was taken back to London and went for a walk one night, I wandered down as far as the Marylebone Theatre, Church street, Edgware road. The big gas jet flaring over the front entrance in the shape of a star attracted me enormously. Then I found the stage entrance with a dim old lamp burning over it and twenty or thirty boys waiting around. I learned they were trying to be taken into the theatre as supers to be dressed up as frogs in the pantomime of 'Froggy Would a-Wooing Go.' I applied with the rest of them and was taken in—and got my threepence per performance (six cents).

"I made a successful appearance, and with my eyes looking through the two apertures that represented the frog's eyes I watched all the actors and I felt that I could do it myself as well as they were doing it. The smell of the grease paint, the commotion and excitement, the fascination of the music bit me and bit me hard, and I think it was there that the theatre got into my head and heart—and it has stayed there ever since."

And now, to bring this talk of youthful aspirations to some manner of conclusion, there is the bootblack whom we mentioned in an early paragraph. He polishes boots at the club and talks of grand opera. By profession, instinct and inclination he is a grand opera singer. Actually, he is a very good bootblack.

He flocks the brush industriously, daubs on the polish and brings the leather to a nice shine. Then he mentions casually that he has memorized "Aida" and is beginning on "Tosca." If by any chance you happen to let on that you can distinguish between "Tosca" and the current popular melody, he will tell you the whole story of his operatic ambitions—how he is only working "temporarily" at the shoe stand, how he sang from the cradle, sang on the streets of Italy, how he studies and works over his music, how he is nearly ready to step out before the diamond horseshoe and take his permanent place in the hearts of the world's music lovers.

Year after year passes by and he still polishes boots and talks of grand opera. But his ambition never ages. It is as youthful as the first peep of spring. He has a chronic attack of youthful aspiration and he doesn't want to be cured.

## Many 1921 Freshmen Are of Tender Years

**B**ETTY JANE HAMILTON, aged 13, started something when she entered Westminster College as a freshman last fall. She started a hunt for the youngest freshman in the various colleges of the country; she started also an inquiry as to whether precocity in education indicates anything special for the future.

The latter investigation may safely be left to the scientific student who makes that proper study of mankind—i. e., man—his life work. It is a big subject which has been undertaken by a number of investigators who seldom get to the general from the particular.

To revert to Miss Betty for a moment. She lives at New Castle, Pa., and was graduated from the high school there at 12, taking rank at once as the youngest graduate by two years of any class in that school. She evidently comes from a precocious family, for her brother Edmund was graduated from the same school two years ago when he was but 14, and in the following fall entered Westminster College as a freshman.

At Vassar the authorities are used to enrolling young girls and by custom have grown indifferent to figures except as they appear on examination papers. The dean said when she was asked to give the name and age of the youngest freshman of this year:

"I remember saying to that young person that she was about to have a sixteenth birthday, but quite forgot her name."

The two youngest students in Cornell University are Miss Ysabel Muller of the town of Ulysses, Tompkins county, N. Y., and Paul Hillegas, a New York city youth, whose family has established a temporary home in Ithaca while their children pursue their studies at the university. Both entered by special permit because neither has yet reached the required age of registration, which is 16. The average age of the entering class is close to 18.

Miss Muller is the daughter of a prosperous chicken farmer who has a farm about seven miles northwest of Ithaca. Her father, Enrique K. Muller, was graduated with the degree of mechanical engineering from Cornell in 1887, and for a time was a successful engineer in Brooklyn. His health failed, however, and for years he has been unable to get about except in a chair. He conceived the idea of raising chickens and has prospered.

Miss Ysabel was graduated from the Ithaca High School last June in the modern language course, and has entered the College of Agriculture. She is said to be the youngest student ever to enter the State College of Agriculture.

Paul Hillegas is the son of the late Howard C. Hillegas, for years an editorial writer of The New York Herald, a contributor to various magazines and the author of several books on the Boers. Mrs. Hillegas moved from New York to Ithaca a few weeks ago to educate her children. A daughter, two years older than Paul, has also entered Cornell.

Young Hillegas was graduated last June from the Curtis High School, where he completed a four year course in three years. He is specializing in higher mathematics and has entered the college of mechanical engineering at Cornell. Professors say they cannot recall another case of a fifteen-year-old boy matriculating in this course, which is highly technical and one of the most difficult in the university.

The youngest member of the freshman class at Wesleyan University, which num-

bers 170 this year, is Zenas Franklin Neumeister, son of John H. Neumeister, a paper maker, of Dalton, Mass. He was born at Dalton June 3, 1905, and was prepared for Wesleyan at the Dalton High School. In conformance with the requirement at Wesleyan, which calls for the election by every member of the freshman class of some athletic activity, young Neumeister has reported for the freshman football squad.

Miss Dorothy Claire Libaire of 400 West 151st street, New York city, and aged 15 years, is the youngest freshman entering Smith College this year.

Miss Libaire was born November 5, 1905, and entered one of New York's public schools at the age of 6. By doubling grades she was graduated from grammar school when 11 years old and entered Hunter College High School. She chose Smith College because her teachers had interested her in that institution, and also because she personally knew Prof. Everett Kimball of the department of history and Mrs. Elizabeth Kimball, museum assistant.

She is an all round girl, greatly interested in athletics. Her favorite sport is swimming. While she has not played hockey before she will try to make the college hockey team. She also is interested in dramatics and music. She expects to major in English at Smith and is taking music lessons.

She is the only daughter of Edward W. Libaire, a civil engineer. Mr. Libaire was graduated from the Columbia School of Mines with honors and also was interested in music, leading the Glee and Mandolin clubs at Columbia. Mrs. Libaire is a talented musician, having sung on the operatic stage with Olive Fremstad.

## What Sharp Eyes Mean to Mankind

**W**E never see everything that is about us, and no two of us ever see precisely the same things. Each sees what his previous training and his habit of mind have prepared him to see. When an American scientist was in Patagonia he fell in with a card player who told him that always after the first few rounds of the game he knew some of the cards as they were dealt; he recognized them by a difference so slight that another man could not detect it when it was pointed out to him.

Now the scientist mentioned is an ornithologist, and he says that this same pre-naturally sharp-eyed man was greatly surprised when he was told that half a dozen kinds of sparrows were feeding and singing about the house. He had never seen any difference in them, he said. In size, color, shape and actions they were all alike, and they all sang and twittered alike, so far as he had ever noticed.

Native Patagonians, like other savage peoples, have very keen eyes for certain things, things which their modes of life have made it indispensable that they should notice. In other words, they are specialists, and as a matter of course they excel in their own particular line. But it does not follow that they have better eyes than are possessed by men of civilized countries.

Set them to find a reversed "a" in the middle of a printed page, and the tears would run down their brown cheeks and they would give up the search with aching eyeballs. But the proofreader can find the reversed letter in a few moments, and never strain his eyes in the least.